

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----127279 191818Z /72

O 191555Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2518
INFO USMISSION USUN IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GABORONE 1873

EXDIS FROM LOW

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV RH UK US
SUBJ: RHODESIA: GRAHAM STATEMENT ON ACCEPTABILITY OF FAIR
ELECTIONS IN RHODESIA

REF: (A) USUN 2518, (B) STATE 154409

1. AS THE DEPARTMENT SURMISED, GRAHAM'S STATEMENT TO MUGABE
ON RECOGNITION OF THE RESULTS OF A FAIR ELECTION IS BASED
ON THE "FIFTH PRINCIPLE". WHAT HE SAID DOES NOT VARY
SIGNIFICANTLY FROM IT. IT HAS BEEN STATED BY OWEN ON A
NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, MOST RECENTLY IN PARLIAMENT ON 2 FEBRUARY.

2. IN MY VIEW MUGABE'S EXPRESSION OF SURPRISE WAS DISINGENUOUS,
SINCE HE WAS PRESENT WHEN IT HAS BEEN MADE BEFORE. (GRAHAM
NOTES THAT IT HAS NOT ONLY BEEN MADE PUBLICLY BUT ALSO IN
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OWEN'S CONVERSATIONS WITH MUGABE AND NKOMO IN LONDON IN MID-
MARCH.)

3. WHILE IT IS TRUE WE HAVE ALWAYS SAID THAT WE DO NOT BELIEVE
THAT A SETTLEMENT WHICH DOES NOT INCLUDE THE PRINCIPLES OF THE
AAP CAN SUCCEED, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT IF WE'RE WRONG AND A
SETTLEMENT DOES SUCCEED OUTSIDE TV THE AAP WE WOULD NOT ACCEPT

THE RESULTS. BY SUCCESS OBVIOUSLY WE WOULD HAVE TO MEAN REESTABLISHMENT OF ADEQUATE LAW AND ORDER TO CONDUCT AN ELECTION WHICH WAS FAIR AND IN WHICH THERE WAS BROAD POPULAR PARTICIPATION. GRAHAM AND I HAVE ALWAYS SAID THAT WE ARE VERY SKEPTICAL THAT THE REGIME CAN CONDUCT SUCH A "FAIR" ELECTION UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES JUST AS WE ARE SKEPTICAL THAT ANY SOLUTION WHICH DOES NOT EMBODY THE PRINCIPLES OF THE AAP CAN SUCCEED.

4. SO FAR AS I AM AWARE, WE HAVE NEVER TAKEN EXCEPTION TO BRITISH RESTATEMENT OF THE PRINCIPLES OF NIBMAR INCLUDING THE FIFTH PRINCIPLE. THOSE PRINCIPLES DO NOT INCLUDE INSISTANCE ON A NEUTRAL ADMINISTRATION TO CONDUCT OR OVERSEE AN ELECTION. TO MY KNOWLEDGE THE BRITISH HAVE NEVER ADDED THIS CONDITION AS PART OF NIBMAR OR THE FIFTH PRINCIPLE. I DO NOT BELIEVE ITS ABSENCE DETRACTS OR CONFLICTS WITH OUR JOINT POSITION THAT WE DOUBT THAT A SETTLEMENT WHICH DOES NOT INCLUDE THE PRINCIPLES OF THE AAP CAN SUCCEED.

5. THEORETICALLY IT IS POSSIBLE THAT 80 PERCENT OF THE RHODESIAN POPULATION MIGHT VOTE IN THE ELECTION, 60 PERCENT OF THEM FOR MUZOREWA, UNDER FAIRLY PEACEABLE CONDITIONS AFTER A CAMPAIGN IN WHICH THERE WAS FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION. I THINK THIS IS UNLIKELY BUT IF IT OCCURRED I SHOULD THINK MANY COUNTRIES INCLUDING OUR OWN WOULD BE HARD PUT TO WITHHOLD RECOGNITION FOR VERY LONG. FURTHERMORE, WE WOULD BE IN AN UNTENABLE POSITION
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IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE REGIME TO SAY THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD WE RECOGNIZE THE RESULTS OF WHAT THEY ARE DOING. THE MOST WE HAVE SAID IS WE DON'T THINK IT WILL WORK. BUT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO SAY THAT IF IT DOES WORK WE WOULD RECOGNIZE THE RESULTS.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2519
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GABORONE 1873

EXDIS FROM LOW

6. IT SEEMS TO ME IMPORTANT THAT WE NOT PUT OURSELVES IN THE POSITION OF SAYING THAT WE WOULD NOT ACCEPT ANY SOLUTION OUTSIDE OF THE AAP. ONCE WE DO THAT, WE WILL FIND THE PF MUCH LESS INCLINED TO COME TO A CONFERENCE OR MAKE ANY ACCOMMODATION WHATSOEVER AT THAT CONFERENCE TO THE VIEWS OF THE INTERNAL GROUP. I BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT THE PF RECOGNIZE THAT, HOWEVER UNLIKELY IT MAY BE, SHOULD THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WORK (I.E., SHOULD THERE BE A SIGNIFICANT DEESCALATION IN VIOLENCE AND A "FREE AND FAIR" ELECTION CARRIED OUT IN WHICH MOST OF THE POPULATION PARTICIPATES), WE WOULD NOT RULE OUT ACCEPTING THAT RESULT. IF WE CAN'T SAY THAT WE HAVE LITTLE LEVERAGE TO BRING THEM TO THE CONFERENCE TABLE.

7. THE BRITISH HAVE GONE BEYOND US IN COMMITTING THEMSELVES TO ACCEPT SUCH A RESULT. THIS THEY DID IN NIBMAR SOME YEARS AGO. FOR THIS REASON I HAVE ALWAYS LEFT THE STATEMENT FOR GRAHAM TO MAKE, BUT HAVE NOT DEMURRED IN IT WHEN HE DOES SO. SINCE THIS IS BRITISH POLICY WHICH GOES BACK A NUMBER OF CONFIDENTIAL

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YEARS, I SEE NO WAY OF GETTING THEM TO PULL BACK ON IT AND, AS I'VE SAID ABOVE, I BELIEVE IT IS USEFUL IN PROVIDING LEVERAGE TO GET A MORE REASONABLE POSITION FROM THE PF, AND IMPORTANT TO OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE REGIME.

8. GRAHAM'S STATEMENT HAS OFTEN LED TO THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE UK WAS PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN OR OBSERVE THE ELECTION IN ORDER TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT IT WAS "FAIR". HE HAS ALWAYS REPLIED IN THE NEGATIVE AND SAID THAT THE JUDGMENT OF FAIRNESS WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE AT THE TIME ON THE BASIS OF AVAILABLE INFORMATION. HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO MAKE SUCH A JUDGMENT ON THE BASIS OF CONDITIONS OF LAW AND ORDER WHICH APPLIED AT THE TIME, FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION AND DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTION ALL OF WHICH WOULD BE WELL KNOWN.

9. IF THE DEPARTMENT HAS SERIOUS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE
ABOVE, I WOULD APPRECIATE HEARING, AND SUGGEST THAT THE MATTER
BE TAKEN UP WITH THE BRITISH. I WILL BE IN GABORONE JUNE 19-20,
PRETORIA JUNE 21-21 AND SALISBURY THEREAFTER.
NORLAND

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